The Morse code has been and remains a distinguishing mark of the Amateur Radio Service. It is the essential language of Amateur Radio communications in emergencies. Eliminating the requirement for Morse code proficiency would fundamentally change the character of Amateur Radio and decrease its usefulness as an emergency communications service. I am in favor of retaining the 5 word per minute exam for all license classes.

Industry Canada seems to have a good approach to this issue. The FCC should develop a comparable structure in our testing program. For example: Include the Morse code test as part of the exams, but do not grade it separately fro the rest of the exam.   If an applicant receives a grade of 75 percent on the overall exam (including the Morse code exam), he/she would be granted that particular license for which they are applying.

Having knowledge of the Morse code as a communications mode is a good thing for Amateur Radio. Eliminating the requirement would just dumb down the service and cripple its ability to function in emergencies.

Respectfully,

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